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DE RUEHBV #0245 1261318

ZNY CCCCC ZZH

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FM AMEMBASSY ZAGREB

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9191

INFO RUEHDL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHLJ/AMEMBASSY LJUBLJANA PRIORITY 6449

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ZAGREB 000245

SIPDIS

PASS TO EUR DAS JONES & DAS GARBER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/05/2019

TAGS: PREL HR SI EUC

SUBJECT: CROATIAN FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESS CONCERNS OVER
POSSIBLE SLOVENE CHANGES TO REHN PROPOSAL ON BORDER DISPUTE

REF: ZAGREB 244

Classified By: ROBERT A. BRADTKE, AMBASSADOR FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) and (d)
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¶11. (C) Foreign Minister Jandrovic called me the afternoon of May 6 to confirm that Croatia had accepted the Rehn proposal on arbitration to resolve the Croatia-Slovenia border dispute (REFTEL). Jandrovic stressed that Rehn had told both him and Slovene Foreign Minister Zbogar in presenting the proposal to them that it was "take it or leave it" and not open to negotiation. For that reason, Croatia had accepted it without change, even if there were parts of the proposal that Croatia would have wanted to change. If the Slovenes came back with changes, Jandrovic said, then Croatia would have to reconsider its acceptance and would propose changes of its own. Jandrovic expressed strong concern that reopening the proposal could make it impossible to bring the process to a conclusion.

¶12. (C) Comment. While I recognize the difficulties that an unconditional acceptance of the Rehn proposal may pose in Ljubljana, it is also clear to me that Slovene changes would feed Croatian insecurities about the Rehn process and lead to proposed changes on the Croatia side. The result would be not just a lost opportunity and a return to square one, but a slipping even further back into negative territory.

BRADTKE